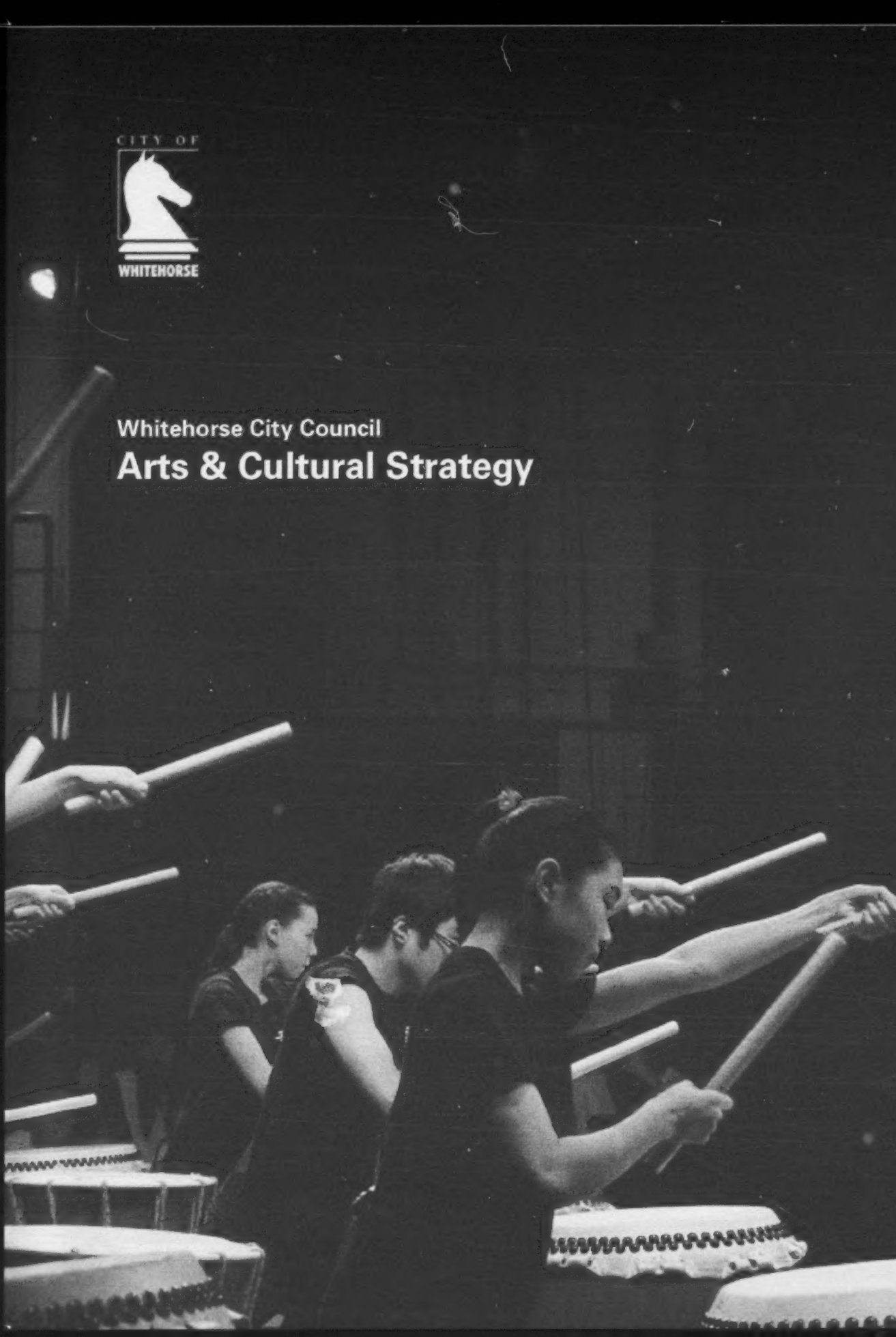
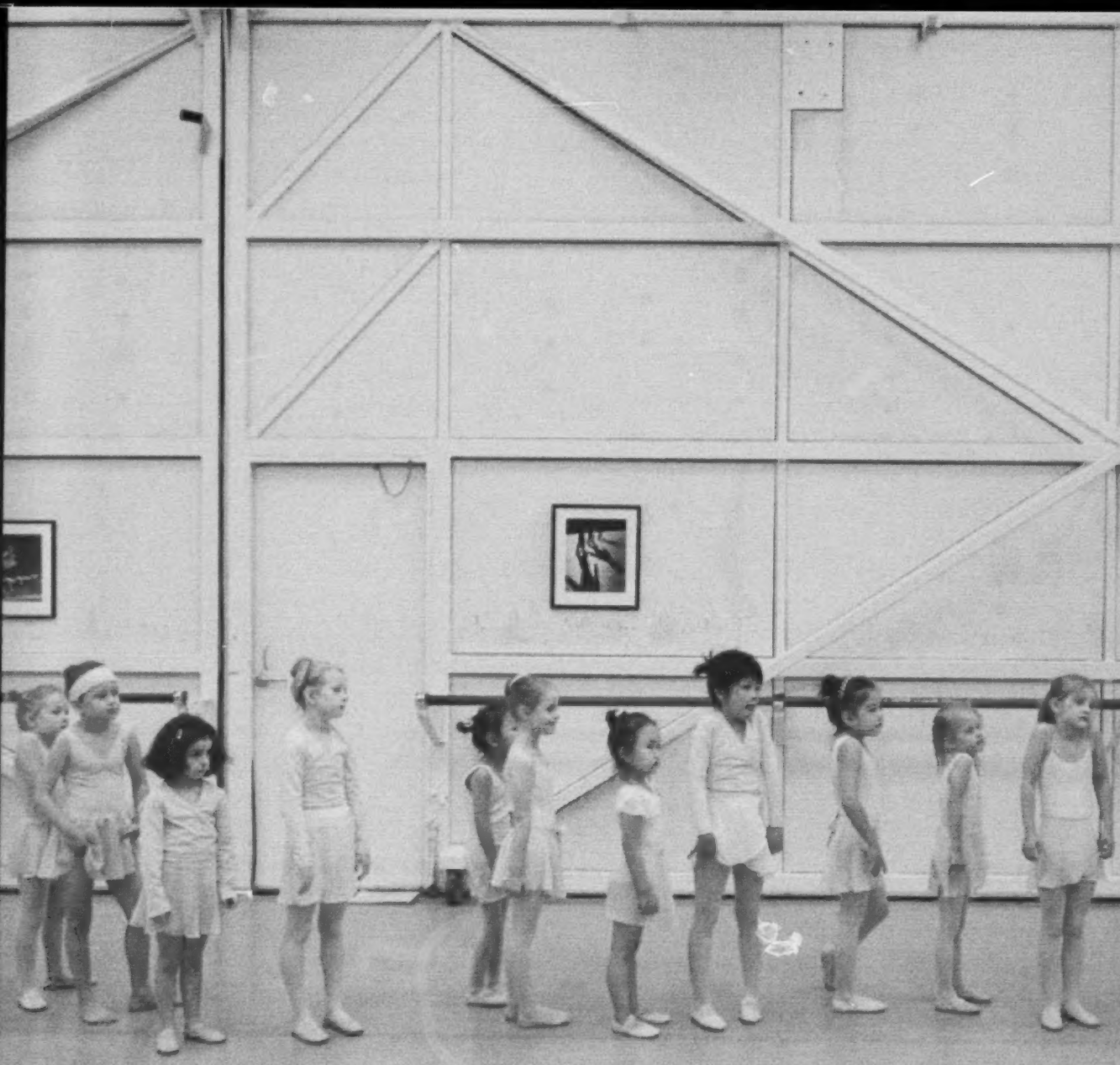
CITY OF WHITEHORSE

Whitehorse City Council

Arts & Cultural Strategy





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The cover and inside front cover image was commissioned by the City of Whitehorse as part of its Snapshots exhibition to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the municipality.
Photographer Jesse Marlow.

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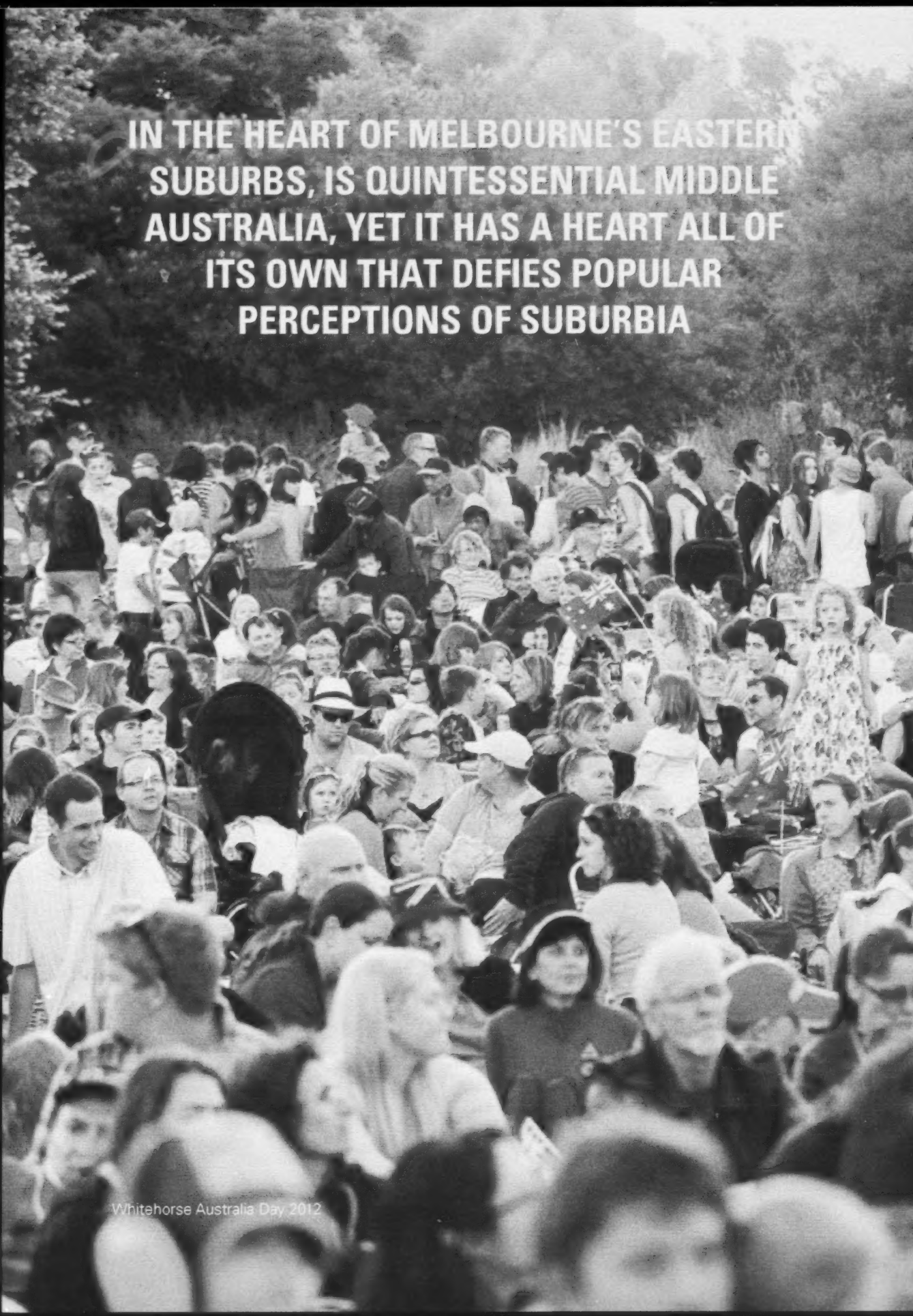

IN THE HEART OF MELBOURNE'S EASTERN SUBURBS, IS QUINTESSENTIAL MIDDLE AUSTRALIA, YET IT HAS A HEART ALL OF ITS OWN THAT DEFIES POPULAR PERCEPTIONS OF SUBURBIA
Whitehorse Australia Day 2012

1. PREFACE

The City of Whitehorse

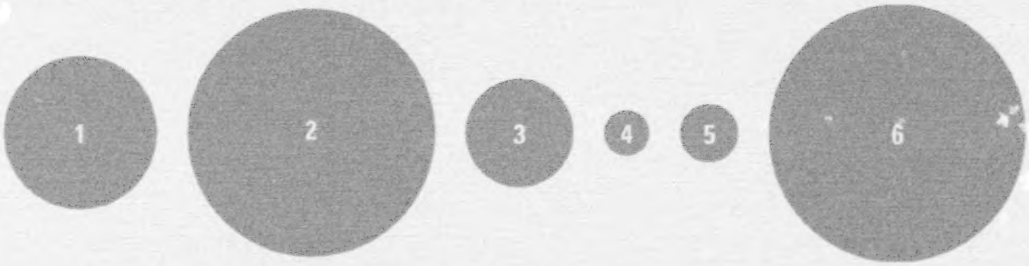
In the heart of Melbourne's eastern suburbs, is quintessential middle Australia, yet it has a heart all of its own that defies popular perceptions of suburbia.

In the two hundred years since this piece of Wurundjeri country was first sighted by Europeans, this landscape has been transformed several times over: to farms, orchards, brickworks, boom-time housing, subdivisions and institutions for the disadvantaged; to the spacious residential estates of the post war era – some retaining their bush surroundings- interspersed with shopping centres and pockets of factories; to the villa units and flats, regional buildings and retail centre and knowledge based industrial estates of the last thirty years. (Suburban Heartland – A history of the City of Whitehorse by Lesley Alves)

The artist movement is iconic to Whitehorse with an artists' camp established in Box Hill in the 1880s giving rise to Impressionism in Australia. From humble beginnings arts and culture has flourished with the work of passionate artisans, indigenous communities, art organisations, the global community, multi-cultural Australia and Whitehorse City Council's own cultural facilities and programs. This legacy is as rich and strong as the landscape and is the foundation for arts and culture in the community as it continually evolves to reflect where the City is now and what it may become in future years.

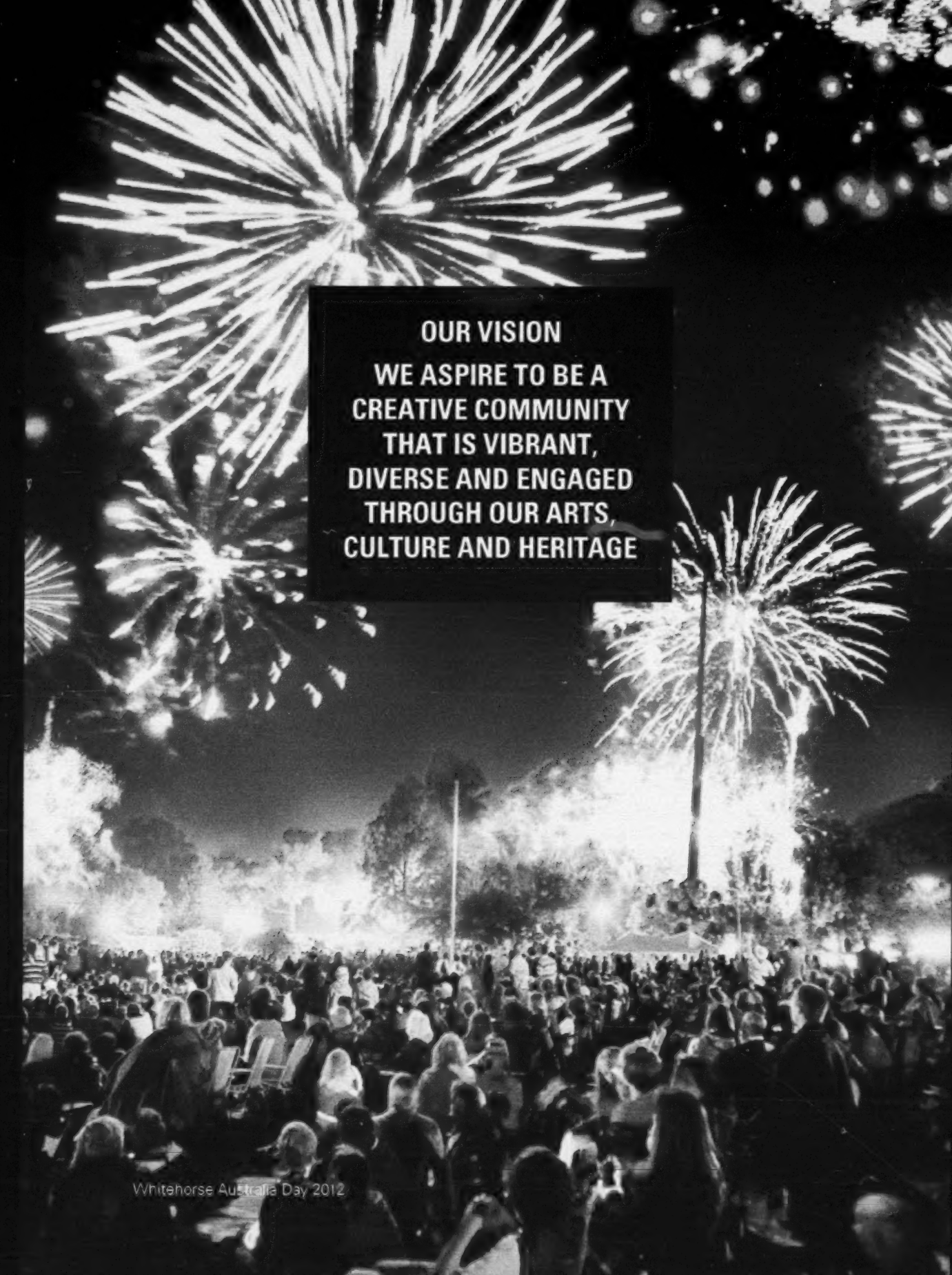
2013 Facility and Program Attendance

Whitehorse City Council's Cultural Facilities and Programs deliver services throughout the calendar year and each area is structured and resourced specifically to meet their respective services outcomes.



1. Box Hill Community Arts Centre *68,285*
2. Box Hill Town Hall *127,406*
3. Festival and Events *46,300*
4. Heritage Services *2,834*
5. Whitehorse Art Space *7,019*
6. Whitehorse Centre *124,372*

Accumulative Total 376,216



OUR VISION

WE ASPIRE TO BE A CREATIVE COMMUNITY THAT IS VIBRANT, DIVERSE AND ENGAGED THROUGH OUR ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Whitehorse Australia Day 2012

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction (Study Objectives)

The purpose of developing an Arts & Cultural Strategy is to achieve:

- a research driven strategic Arts & Cultural Plan for Council that delivers organisational goals and incorporates the needs and aspirations of the broader community
- outcomes that would influence planning and policy across a wide range of Council Departments rather than it being a stand-alone Arts & Cultural Strategy

Council's Cultural Facilities and Programs unit produces a well established arts and cultural program. This paper acknowledges the breadth of this service and focuses its attention on the arts and cultural gaps that could be addressed with tailored planning and resources.

Research & Consultation

A comprehensive research and consultation program has driven the development of this strategy. It has included review and analysis of Council programs and arts organisations, three tiers of government policies, strategies and reports as well as direct consultation through surveys, workshops and interviews with Council, community and industry professionals. The amount of research collected is vast. The Arts & Cultural Strategy represents the top end analysis of the research findings and frames a picture of what the community want and what Council can do to deliver. Full documentation of all the research and consultation can be found in the companion document 'The Whitehorse Centre Feasibility Study and Whitehorse Arts & Cultural Strategy Market Research and Consultation Findings'.

Vision

To drive this strategy an arts & cultural 'Vision' for the City of Whitehorse has been distilled from the research and consultation. It reflects Whitehorse City Council's vision for our community. The Arts & Cultural Vision is:

We aspire to be a creative community that is vibrant, diverse and engaged through our arts, culture and heritage.

Our Arts and Cultural Pillars

Two major themes emerged as priorities for Arts & Culture in Whitehorse. These themes are identified as Arts and Cultural Pillars. These pillars form the foundation stones for arts and culture and outline both the services and community cultural development framework in Whitehorse. These pillars are:

1. Arts & Cultural Facilities and Programs
2. Community Cultural Development.

This paper provides information about the overarching findings for each pillar, the priority issues and the recommended direction to achieve outcomes for the community over the next eight years. The priority areas within each pillar are:

Pillar 1 Arts & Cultural Facilities and Programs	**Pillar 2** Community Cultural Development
1. Facility, program and provision gap	1. Community Spirit and Pride of Place
2. Box Hill Community Arts Centre and its Programs	2. Art Collection Development and Management
3. Box Hill Town Hall	3. Arts Industry Support
4. Festival and Events	4. Cultural Development Support Services
5. Heritage	5. Grant Programs
6. Whitehorse Art Space	
7. Whitehorse Centre	

3. INTRODUCTION

Whitehorse City Council began development of an Arts & Cultural Strategy to guide the city's arts and cultural development for the future.

In keeping with the broader commitments of Council's core strategic documents - the Council Vision 2013 - 2023, the Council Plan (2013 - 2107), the Whitehorse Community Wellbeing Plan (2013 - 2017) and the Municipal Strategic Statement - the Arts & Cultural Strategy will focus on delivering the aspirations of the Whitehorse Community for the 21st century...

Our vision is that Whitehorse will continue to:

- support a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and diverse community
- maintain and enhance our built environment to ensure a liveable and sustainable city
- protect and enhance our open space and natural environments
- strategic leadership and open and accessible government
- support a local healthy economy

Whitehorse has a proud historic link with the Australian Impressionist arts movement and the community have long been keen arts patrons, participants and practitioners. As a modern thriving city, Whitehorse residents demand and enjoy a rich cultural life. This capacity is an important defining feature of Whitehorse City's past, but is also an integral part of Whitehorse's present and future cultural life. The presence of arts and culture as a professional pursuit, a leisure or social outlet, an entertainment or an environmental enhancement is a significant contributor to an active, vibrant and sustainable community.

The Arts & Cultural Strategy (project) set out to achieve:

- a research driven strategic Arts & Cultural Plan for Council that delivers organisational goals and incorporates the needs and aspirations of the broader community
- planning outcomes that will influence planning and policy across a wide range of Council areas rather than being a stand-alone Arts & Cultural Strategy

This Arts & Cultural Strategy is a 'companion document' to the Whitehorse Centre Feasibility Study and Whitehorse Arts & Cultural Strategy Market Research and Consultation Findings. These documents contain all of the detailed information from the research and consultation which is not reproduced here.

This paper identifies the major themes that have emerged from the project research and consultation. The major themes are the priority focus areas for the Arts & Cultural Strategy and are identified as the Arts and Cultural Pillars.

4. DEFINING ARTS & CULTURE

Our definition of Arts and Culture

There is no one simple definition of arts and culture. For the purposes of our Arts & Cultural Strategy we've defined arts and culture as embracing all forms of creative expression. This includes activities such as performing and visual arts, textiles and craft, music, literature, multimedia, heritage facilities and programs and festivals and events.

Arts and cultural practice can range from hobby based and non professional activity through to professional endeavour. It may be privately funded, publically subsidised, commercially sustainable or a combination of these elements.

Arts and culture is an integral part of what Council does because it represents the cultural identity of the City of Whitehorse. Arts and culture also plays an essential role in the life of its residents. It:

- contributes to the health and wellbeing of residents
- contributes to the local economy through tourism, industry, employment and education
- continues to promote and develop a distinctive, attractive, vibrant and sustainable urban environment
- provides a sense of community connectedness
- contributes to the rich array of local leisure and recreational opportunities
- conserves for future generations

This strategy focuses on creating an environment where arts and culture can be supported, flourish and continue to evolve to express something of the uniqueness of 'who we are' and 'where we live'.

THIS STRATEGY FOCUSES ON CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE ARTS AND CULTURE CAN BE SUPPORTED, FLOURISH AND CONTINUE TO EVOLVE TO EXPRESS SOMETHING OF THE UNIQUENESS OF 'WHO WE ARE' AND 'WHERE WE LIVE'.

5. FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOCUS ON ARTS & CULTURE

At both the Federal and State level, the predominant focus on support for Arts and Culture is often considered to be through provision of grants to artists and major public arts companies and/or institutions. This is also a support role that Local Government commonly adopts as part of its arts and cultural service provision model.

There is little funding available at both the Federal and State level to support capital and recurrent funding opportunities at a Local Government level. Both Federal and State funding typically supports national or state based institutions or flagship companies rather than localising support.

Federal Government

The Australia Council for the Arts is the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body. It supports Australia's arts through funding, strengthening and developing the arts sector. The Australia Council delivers more than $160 million in funding for arts organisations and individual artists across the country annually.

The strategic priorities for arts and culture at the Federal level are:

- artists' careers
- audience access and participation in the arts
- business and philanthropic involvement in the arts
- increased support for the arts
- arts content for the digital era

State Government

Arts Victoria is the State Government arts body responsible for support and developing arts programs, cultural infrastructure and implementing initiatives that assist artists and creative practitioners. Its role is to advise the Minister for the Arts on sustaining and developing Victorian arts and cultural industries through economic and social change and on implementation policy concerned with arts and cultural activity. Arts Victoria's strategic priorities for Arts and Culture at the Victorian State level are:

- developing cultural identity
- creating content
- forging connections
- capturing value

Local Government

Local government is the level of government that is closest to the people. Its involvement in and support of arts and culture stems from:

- an intimate knowledge of and collaboration with the local community
- provision of key community infrastructure
- the support and facilitation of developments that enhance the physical, social and economic environment of the local community
- planning for and provision of services and programs to meet known local demand
- it's role in supporting community participation and development
- advocacy on behalf of the local community

The strategic priorities vary slightly from municipality to municipality, however the central themes tend to stem from:

- building and strengthening local identity
- supporting and ensuring access to a diversity of cultural experiences

Whitehorse Global Fiesta 2012

6. LIVING IN WHITEHORSE

Whitehorse City

Whitehorse is considered an inner to middle metropolitan municipality. Its eastern most boundary is 12 kms from the Melbourne CBD.

History: The City of Whitehorse was proclaimed in December 1994, following the amalgamation of the former cities of Box Hill and Nunawading. The birth of the City reunited the suburbs which formed the original Shire of Nunawading more than 100 years ago. The municipality derives its namesake and logo from a white horse dating back to the 1850s, when a white horse statue adorned the front entrance of the City's first hotel and two-storey building. Today, a memorial stands on the former site of the hotel and the white horse symbolises the City's identity.

Population

Whitehorse has an estimated residential population of 159,133 (as of 30 June 2013.) In keeping with trends elsewhere, it is expected that Whitehorse's older population will grow over time. The proportion of residents in each age category are:

- 0-4 – 5.8%
- 5-11 – 8.1%
- 12-17 – 6.8%
- 18-24 – 10.5%
- 25-34 – 13.0%
- 35-49% – 21.2%
- 50-69 – 21.5%
- 70+ – 12.9%

Indigenous Culture

The Wurundjeri people are the traditional owners of the land now known as Whitehorse. The Wurundjeri are one of seven tribes of the Kulin Nation and collectively its members claimed the part of the Port Phillip region that was drained by the Yarra River and its tributaries. Woi wurrung is the traditional language of this group and Bunjil the eagle is their totem. Since the Dreamtime, Wurundjeri history has been passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth.

Many of the stories have been lost or have faded due to the devastating effects of white settlement on the Indigenous population. Despite these major cultural, social and environmental changes, Wurundjeri traditions and culture continues to grow in the City of Whitehorse.

Arts Heritage

The City of Whitehorse has a strong sense of pride, history and a celebrated connection to the development of the first major movement in Australian Art – the Australian Impressionists. Late in 1885, artists Tom Roberts, Frederick McCubbin and Louis Abrahams established the first of their artist camps in a bushland paddock owned by local farmer David Houston, in Box Hill. Today, the City of Whitehorse has an impressive art collection containing a total of nine works by members of the Box Hill Artists Camp, including McCubbin, Roberts and Streeton.

POPULATION
0-4 YEARS
5.8%
5-11 YEARS
8.1%
12-17 YEARS
6.8%
18-24 YEARS
10.5%
25-34 YEARS
13.0%
35-49 YEARS
21.2%
50-69 YEARS
21.5%
70+ YEARS
12.9%
Whitehorse Australia Day 2012

6. LIVING IN WHITEHORSE

Cultural Diversity

Almost one-third of Whitehorse's 159,133 residents were born overseas. Important points to note:

- 110 different languages are spoken by residents
- most common languages other than English are Cantonese, Mandarin, Greek, Italian, Vietnamese, Hindi, German, Sinhalese, Korean, Indonesian and Arabic
- in the 2011 census, 341 people (approx. 0.2%) identified as indigenous in Whitehorse

Community Indicators Victoria (2007) research found 94.5% of Whitehorse people agreed or strongly agreed that cultural diversity is a good thing for a society, compared to 92.1% in the Eastern Metro Region and the Victorian State average of 89.4%.

Health and Wellbeing

Whitehorse is rated one of the healthiest municipalities in Victoria (Department of Health, 2006) with an average life expectancy of 81 years for males and 85 years for females.

In 2011, 50.9% of Whitehorse residents reported via the Victorian Population Health Survey that their health was either excellent or very good, compared to 49.6% in the Eastern Metropolitan Region and the state average of 46.6%.

The significant community health and wellbeing benefits arising from involvement in and access to arts and cultural activity are well recognised. They include positive effects across adolescents, adults and older people, on individual's social support and social networks and on enhanced mental wellbeing outcomes. Increasingly, evidence also indicates arts and cultural activity/ participation in the community contributes to reduced crime, increased employment rates and enhanced educational performance.

Income

Analysis of individual income levels the City of Whitehorse in 2011 compared to Melbourne statistical division show that there was a larger proportion of people earning a high income ($1,500 or more per week) as well as a larger proportion of people earning a low income (less than $400 per week). Overall, 14.1% of the population earned a high income, and 38.7% earned a low income, compared with 12.9% and 35.8% respectively for Melbourne SD.

110 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY OUR RESIDENTS

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN WHITEHORSE

Over 5000 people were represented or directly spoken to as part of the extensive community consultation and market research that was undertaken for this project to ensure that it is evidence driven in its final recommendations.

Arts and Cultural Strategy Household Survey

A sample of 501 randomly selected residents from the Whitehorse area completed telephone surveys to identify current arts and culture participation trends, future needs and priority issues. The survey gathered statistically valid information about:

- current participation rates
- awareness of current programs and activities
- arts & cultural activity choices
- future arts, and cultural priorities
- why residents participate in arts and cultural activities
- what would assist residents to participate in arts and cultural activities in the future

In line with Australian Market Research Guidelines, only people aged 15 years and over living in the Whitehorse municipality were invited to complete surveys.

Meetings, Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews

Over 200 people participated in meetings, focus groups and/or stakeholder interviews as part of building the evidence base for the Whitehorse Arts & Cultural Strategy. Across these consultative forums, participants were asked to reflect and comment on:

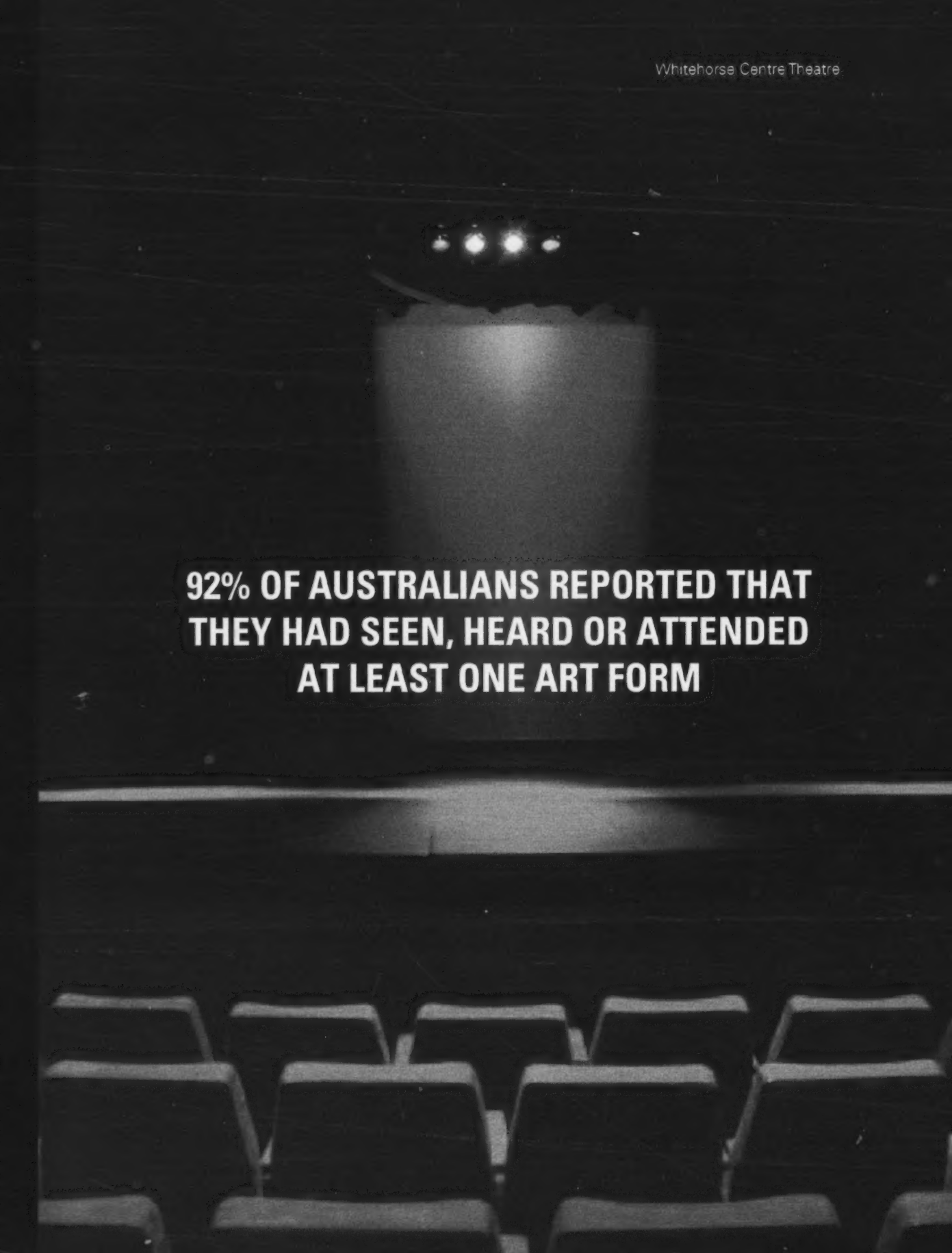
- what they identify as the key arts and cultural services Council currently provides and their perspective on them
- how they have been involved in arts and culture in Whitehorse
- the role of arts and culture in Whitehorse and how important this is to them/their groups
- what gaps and opportunities in service and activity they identify
- if they or their group have aspirations for more involvement in arts and culture in Whitehorse and what the issues associated with this might be
- what (if any) aspirations they might have for Whitehorse arts and culture in the future

Arts, Cultural & Heritage Group, Community Group, Artist and On-line surveys

Arts, Cultural & Heritage Groups, Community Groups and Artists were all sent surveys for the purpose of gathering baseline information about the activities, facilities, key issues and challenges facing them. An on-line survey was also established via Council's website to enable local residents to provide information on their current interest and involvement in arts and culture activity as well as their issues, challenges, ideas and aspirations for the future.

Facility User Surveys

Surveys were distributed to users of all of Council's principle cultural and heritage facilities. These surveys provide key information about how facilities are used, how well they function and any issues, challenges and/or future needs or gaps.


Whitehorse Centre Theatre
92% OF AUSTRALIANS REPORTED THAT THEY HAD SEEN, HEARD OR ATTENDED AT LEAST ONE ART FORM

8. WHY ARTS AND CULTURE IS IMPORTANT FOR WHITEHORSE

One of the key priorities of Council's Arts & Cultural Strategy is to develop a clear rationale for the strategic provision of arts and cultural services responsive to community priorities. The research and consultation undertaken for the strategy confirms that most Whitehorse residents consider arts and culture to be an integral part of a balanced life.

It is also important to note those who are not particularly involved or interested in arts and culture, acknowledge its worth within the community.

The rationale for availability of and access to arts and culture in the Whitehorse community is summarised by this research:

Principle	Participation in and access to arts and cultural activity is part of our daily life.
Rationale	The 2010 Australia Council for the Arts report "More than bums on seats: Australian participation in the arts", based on national consultation and research, found that the arts are strongly supported by the Australian community. Nationally, in the 12 months prior to the survey, 92% of people reported that they had seen, heard or attended at least one art form. 40% had creatively participated, 7% said they had no involvement and 1% reported only having creatively participated. The Australia Council research showed that Australians no longer carried the view that you're either an arts person or a sports person. In the survey, people were asked to respond to a number of statements to gauge the Australian community value of the arts. 96% of respondents agreed that "people can enjoy both the arts and sports". The Arts Victoria Report "the Arts and Culture in Victoria - A statistical overview report 2010" identified that 85% of people in Victoria attended cultural venues and events in the 12 months prior to interview (2005/2006).
Principle	Arts and cultural activity builds social cohesion and improves community health and wellbeing.
Rationale	In support of priorities within Council's key umbrella documents, there is evidence that participation in arts and cultural activity: - contributes to reduced crime, increased employment rates, and enhanced educational performance.(Baraket 2005, Mills and Brown 2004, White 2006) - has positive effects on individual's social support and social networks and provides enhanced mental health outcomes. This link has been supported in studies with adolescents, adults and older people, as well as those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Bond, Butler, Thomas et al 2007; Brugha, Weich, Singleton et al 2005; Caron, Latimer, Tousignant 2007; Fiori, Antonucci, Cortina 2006) - can be instrumental in helping people and communities overcome poverty and social exclusion. (Arts Council England, 2005, Berkman and Glass, 2000)

8. WHY ARTS AND CULTURE IS IMPORTANT FOR WHITEHORSE

Principle	Whitehorse residents want and need access to a range of local arts and cultural programs, facilities and services.
Rationale	Whitehorse people consider arts and culture to be an important component of balanced community and lifestyle options. The Arts & Cultural Strategy household survey undertaken found that: - 76% of residents had attended or participated in arts and cultural activity outside of their home in the 12 months prior to the survey Over 5000 people were represented or directly spoken to as part of the development of the Arts & Cultural Strategy and it is evident locals place great importance on being able to do and be part of arts and cultural activities.
Principle	Whitehorse has a strong arts and cultural heritage but arts and culture is also identified as a unique feature and strength of its future aspirations.
Rationale	Those consulted felt that the arts and cultural heritage of the Whitehorse area (e.g. Australian Impressionist movement and the Box Hill artists camp) is an important legacy that should continue as it's a major part of what makes Whitehorse a unique and wonderful place to be.
Principle	Council recognises its core role in the provision of arts and cultural infrastructure, services and programs as reflective of the needs and interests of its community.
Rationale	There needs to be arts and cultural infrastructure, support services and programs to enable the local community to access and participate in arts and cultural activity. Public infrastructure and support mechanisms need to be in place to enable this service.

9. ARTS AND CULTURE IN WHITEHORSE NOW

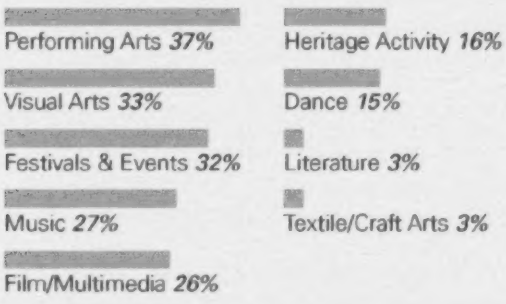
The City of Whitehorse offers a diverse and arts and cultural program that is highly valued within the community. Statistics indicate that arts and culture plays an important part in the lives of residents. The directions paper acknowledges these service and focuses on any potential gaps or growth for arts and culture in Whitehorse.

In the twelve months preceding the 500 person independent telephone survey the following data can be extracted on arts and culture participation:

- 76% of Whitehorse people had attended or participated in arts, cultural or heritage activity (72% men, 79% women)
- 19% did so inside of Whitehorse only
  47% did so outside of Whitehorse only
- 34% had attended or participated both within and outside of Whitehorse

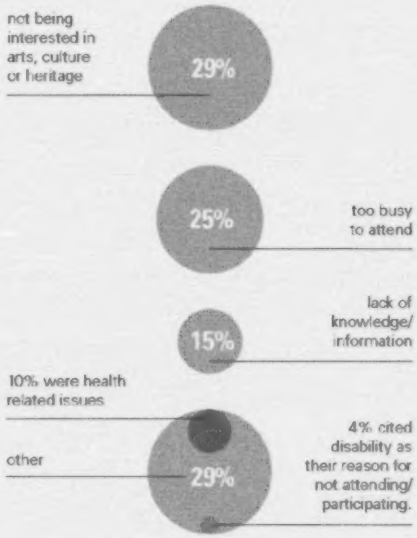
The age groups with the highest attendance/ participation rates were 40-49 years and 20-29 years. Attendance/participation rates dropped off in the over 60 age group.

The residents who had attended or participated in arts & cultural activities nominated over 60 different forms of activity. The broad categories and the levels of participation/attendance locally and outside of Whitehorse were:



Arts and Culture participation/attendance percentages of residents locally and outside of Whitehorse

From the 500 households surveyed it was reported that 120 households had not participated in an arts, culture or heritage activity. The main reasons cited by people for not having attended or participated related to:



9. ARTS AND CULTURE IN WHITEHORSE NOW

In the 2013 calendar year approximately 376,216 people attended Council managed arts facilities and cultural programs in Whitehorse.

- Festivals & events, many of which are directly organised by Council register as the overall highest level of local resident participation and/or attendance within the City of Whitehorse. Community festivals and events and Indigenous/multi-cultural events, within the festival category have the highest attendance/participation rates. It is noted that festival attendance drops off in the older age groups.
- Within the visual arts category of arts and cultural activities, art exhibitions were the most popular individual form of arts and cultural activity that was participated in or attended. The interest is consistent across the age groupings from 15 – 70+ indicating a high level of importance/significance for the Whitehorse community. This is important in considering the provision of service and facilities.
- The performing arts were highly attended and participated in by Whitehorse residents. Musical Theatre and plays/drama hold particular interest in the over 30s through to over 70s age groups. This is important in consideration of redevelopment of the Whitehorse Centre.
- Classical/symphonic music rates highly as a popular activity to participate in or attend. It is interesting to note that the significant interest in this activity is in the 60+ age group. This suggests that over time access to this may increase with an ageing population.
- Pop/Rock music has significant appeal in the under 30s demographic. As this represents the smallest age group surveyed this interest can easily be overlooked. The issue of access to and/or places to participate in 'pop/rock' by younger people surfaced in the arts and cultural group surveys and consultative meeting processes.
- The high attendance levels at markets, festivals and outdoor events indicates that residents place a high value on activities that connect them with and celebrate their community. This is consistent with State Government policies that support on a State level programs that encourages community strengthening and connectiveness.
- Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex rates as a popular activity in those aged 40 years and over for Heritage Services. Those who attended the facility value the activity highly.

There currently exists a strong participation and appreciation of arts and culture in Whitehorse. Statistics indicate residents have access and participate in Whitehorse Council events and programs or have attended a Whitehorse facility in the twelve months preceding the survey.

Festivals & Events *38%*
Box Hill Town Hall *29%*
Whitehorse Centre *25%*
Schwerkolt Cottage & Museum *18%*
Box Hill Community Arts Centre *13%*
Arts Collection/Artspace *11%*

10. ARTS & CULTURAL STRATEGY PLAN

The Council Planning framework details the relationships between various Council plans and strategies. As depicted in the diagram, there is a direct connection between the Arts and Cultural Strategy and Council's other strategic plans. The Council Vision 2013-2023 outlines Whitehorse's aspirations for the next 10 years. The aspirations outlined in the Whitehorse Council Vision 2013-2023 are further underpinned in the following key strategic directions Whitehorse City Council commits to:

- support a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and diverse community
- maintain and enhance our built environment to ensure a liveable and sustainable city
- protect and enhance our open space and natural environments
- strategic leadership, partnership and open and accessible government
- support a healthy local economy

Positioned under the Council Vision 2013-2023 are the Council Plan 2013-2017, the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Health and Wellbeing in Whitehorse 2013-2017 (the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).

These plans are Council's high-level strategic documents under which other plans, policies, projects and strategies sit. The Arts and Cultural Strategy is guided by these high level documents, but also feeds back into the planning and preparation of objectives and actions to achieve Council's vision.

There are a number of other strategic plans and documents that the Arts and Cultural Strategy has close relationships with by virtue of common objectives or shared actions and outcomes for the community. The other plans and strategies that are identified are:

- Our Vision for Whitehorse (2013 - 2023)
- Council Annual Report
- Whitehorse Water Action Plan
- Whitehorse Sustainability Strategy
- Whitehorse Recreation Strategy
- Whitehorse Open Space Strategy
- Disability Policy and Action Plan
- Whitehorse Youth Strategy
- Positive Aging Strategy
- Whitehorse Art Collection Policy
- Exhibitions Policy

COUNCIL VISION
COUNCIL PLAN (INCLUDING LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN
MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC STATEMENT
ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN
MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN
SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND PLANS (FOR EXAMPLE)
DISABILITY POLICY AND ACTION PLAN
POSITIVE AGEING STRATEGY
ARTS AND CULTURAL STRATEGY
WHITEHORSE YOUTH STRATEGY
RECREATION STRATEGY

Diagram 1: Whitehorse's Planning Framework

11. HOW OUR ARTS & CULTURAL STRATEGY WORKS

Vision Statement

From the consultation undertaken, along with the review of Council's core guiding strategies Whitehorse people are very proud of the City's arts and cultural heritage. They believe that arts and culture is important in making Whitehorse a unique and interesting place to live; it contributes to the local economy, it provides an opportunity for people to spend time locally with family and friends and makes people feel connected in the community.

Based on consultation and research, the vision for Arts and Culture in Whitehorse is:

WE ASPIRE TO BE A CREATIVE COMMUNITY THAT IS VIBRANT, DIVERSE AND ENGAGED THROUGH OUR ARTS CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Our Arts & Cultural Pillars

Two major themes emerged as priorities for Arts and Culture in Whitehorse and these themes are identified as Arts and cultural Pillars. They are foundation stones for arts and culture and outline both the services and community cultural development framework in Whitehorse.

Our Arts and Cultural Pillars are:

1. Arts and Cultural Facilities and Programs
2. Community Cultural Development

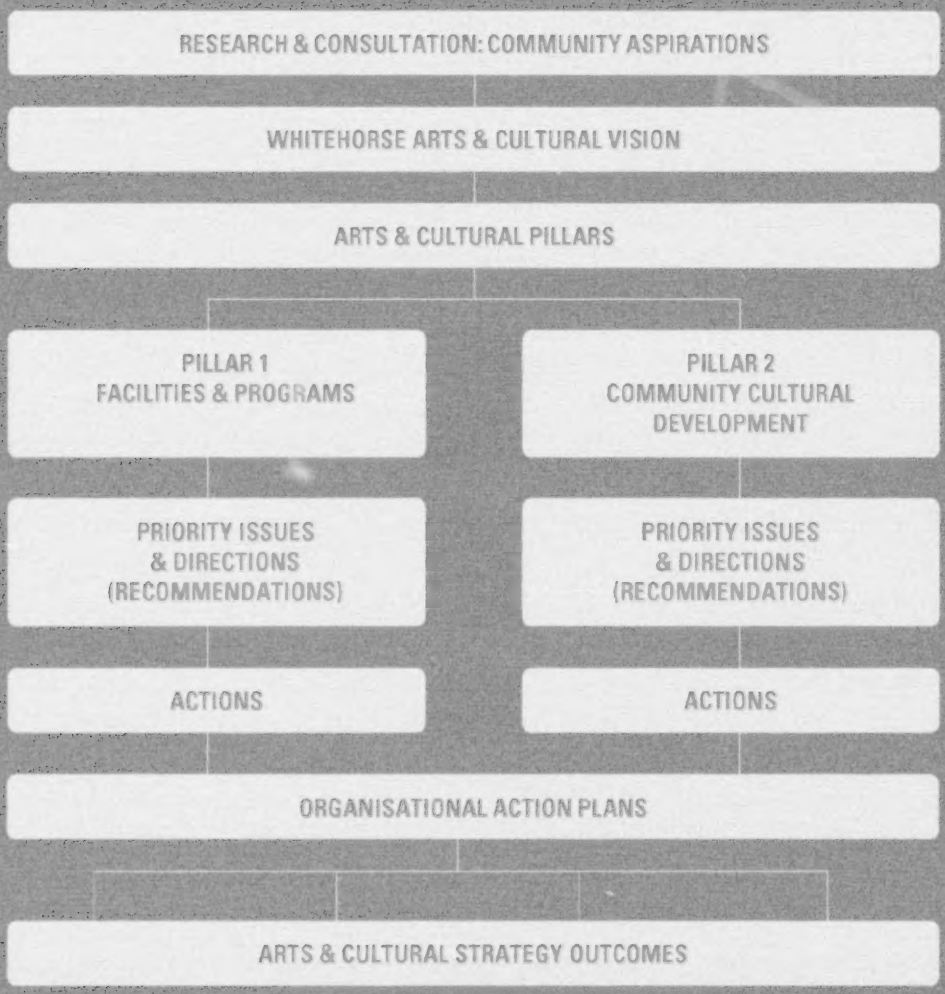
The next two sections focus on how we move from the priority areas for Arts and Culture in Whitehorse to actions and outcomes for the community. Each 'pillar' section is structured to provide:

- an outline of the overarching findings
- the priority issues
- the directions that connect the priority issues, gaps and opportunities with the recommended actions to be undertaken as part of the Arts and Cultural Strategy action plan, over the next eight years

As noted earlier in this document, detailed research and consultation findings can be found in the Whitehorse Centre Feasibility Study and the Whitehorse Arts & Cultural Strategy Market Research and Consultation Findings document.

The principles and actions from each of the Arts and Cultural Pillars then become outcomes for the community through the Whitehorse City Council's department plans.

HOW IT WORKS


RESEARCH & CONSULTATION: COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS
WHITEHORSE ARTS & CULTURAL VISION
ARTS & CULTURAL PILLARS
PILLAR 1
FACILITIES & PROGRAMS
PILLAR 2
COMMUNITY CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT
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PRIORITY ISSUES
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(RECOMMENDATIONS)
ACTIONS
ACTIONS
ORGANISATIONAL ACTION PLANS
ARTS & CULTURAL STRATEGY OUTCOMES

Whitehorse Global Fiesta 2012

PILLAR 1

ARTS & CULTURAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

PILLAR 1
ARTS & CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

11.1.1 Whitehorse Arts & Cultural Facilities and Programs

Whitehorse residents consider the provision of programs and facilities for arts and cultural activity an important council service. The role that these facilities play in enabling arts and cultural activity is highly valued and should not be underestimated. Arts programs are an equally essential component of the arts and cultural life of the community. The arts and cultural review confirmed that Council facilities range from basic halls and meeting rooms through to the more iconic, unique or specialised facilities. Some facilities are 'spaces for hire' where people can program their own activities, others are programmed by Council or other groups that directly contribute to and build community culture.

As identified, Council provides a number of specialist arts and cultural facilities and programs arts activities into these facilities. These include the Whitehorse Centre, the Box Hill Community Art Centre, the Whitehorse Artspace and Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex. The programming offered by these facilities is a critical aspect of the cultural landscape of the municipality and research confirmed this is of high value to the community. The high attendance at performing arts activities indicates strong support for the provision of these programs and suitable facilities

Festivals, many of which are directly organised by Council, are the activity residents most frequently participated in (38%). The high attendance at markets, festivals and outdoor events indicates that residents place a high value on activities that connect them with and celebrate their community.

Provision of and access to a range of facilities is a critical aspect of facilitating arts and cultural activity within the community. Access to programs and arts and cultural activities are also crucial to building an arts and cultural environment. Overall, Whitehorse people highly value the range of facilities and programs that are available to them. The research and consultation undertaken found a number gaps and/or community priorities that relate to Council's facility and program provision.

11.1.2 Facility and Program Facility Gaps

A number of facility gaps and/or shortfalls were identified.

- additional Whitehorse Centre performance space
- additional Whitehorse Centre studio (for programs, classes and meetings)
- additional exhibition space (for showing the municipal collection and for artists to show their work)
- a lack of places to see and perform music came through as a strong message – with lack of opportunity to access audiences in Whitehorse a frustration
- a full service premium function capability able to accommodate large events

11.1.2.1 Gaps in Service Delivery

- People with children: 62% of 30-39 year olds and 60% 40-49 year olds reported that they attended arts and cultural activities with family members including children. Feedback indicated that the provision of more programming for families and children would encourage greater participation.

Whitehorse Carols 2011

- People with disabilities identified a number of specific challenges that often prevent them from participating. These were:
  - accessibility to facilities/festivals and associated infrastructure (paths, transport etc.)
  - provision of programs where integration is welcomed (not specific programs for disabled)
  - inexperience/lack of training of program providers in dealing with disabilities
  - support for participation (provision of/ for helpers, guides, etc.)
  - affordability
- Young People: consultation with young people identified that:
  - affordability was a significant barrier to them being able to participate in some arts, cultural and heritage activities
  - advertising what programs were offered is insufficient
  - flexible options such as 'come and try' sessions or shorter term programs could encourage greater participation
  - there is strong need for programs and activities to be 'young people friendly' to encourage their participation
  - lack of suitable 'young people friendly' venues for young people's arts and cultural activities is a barrier to involvement
- Older People: community groups identified that more arts programs for seniors plus access for all abilities should be in Council's top 10 priorities for provision of services and programs. Just over 30% of people 50 and over attend programs/activities by themselves suggesting that there is a strong social benefit for this age group in attending activities. With an ageing population access to arts and cultural activities is an important consideration for future planning. Survey results indicated that there is 'drop off' in participation with outdoor events in the over 60s age group possibly linked to accessibility.

11.1.2.2 Community Facility Management Services

Neighbourhood or Community Centres featured strongly across the consultation as places where a lot of people access affordable arts and cultural activities. 19% of residents identified that they had participated in programs and classes provided at Council's neighbourhood or community centres making them an important provider of arts & cultural activities within the municipality particularly in the area of affordable local classes and workshops. As well as the centres running programs a number of arts and cultural groups meet in these facilities. Consultation with arts & cultural and/or community groups that used community halls, neighbourhood/community centres and other facilities identified a number of issues. These include:

- a greater understanding and improved communication of the process, standards and time frames to address maintenance issues at facilities
- security of tenure
- opportunities for allocation preferences for encouraging/building community activity and participation
- affordability of fees and charges.

11.1.2.3 Improved Integration and collaboration with the Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Service

The libraries are managed by the Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation and operate as a standalone service. They develop and provide arts and cultural programming that is often overlooked in the discussion about program provision. Often the programming mirrors other programming that occurs at Council particularly around special days such as harmony day. 27% of residents identified that they had attended or participated in an arts & cultural activity at the regional libraries making them an important arts and cultural facility and service. An opportunity exists for greater collaboration between the Library corporation and other arts, cultural and heritage services.

11.1.2.4 Diverse music program

The need for opportunities for broader access to a greater range of music forms came through the range of consultative methods.

- 11% of residents said that they had attended or participated in classical/symphonic music, with the main participants in the over 60s age bracket
- 24% of residents in the 20-29 age group said they had attended pop/rock music
- 13% of household survey respondents said that 'more music events' would encourage them to participate in arts and cultural activities in the future
- young people particularly identified that there was a lack of the type of music they want to see in Whitehorse

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council program and facility planning for the future reflects the following identified gaps and community priorities:

- the Whitehorse Centre business case to review the need for increased and accessible performance space, rehearsal space, studio and workshop space, exhibition space and music performance opportunities
- program provision for people with identified areas of social need in the community to target social issues and marginalised groups with Whitehorse and beyond
- explore alternate gallery space opportunities in the local area for community exhibitions that are not operated by Council
- continue Councils program of a service driven asset management review of Council's community halls and other facilities to ensure that over time, facilities are improved to meet the service needs of the community and capacity of facilities for arts and cultural activities
- through the review of leases and licences Council will continue to review communication processes relating to maintenance and renewal programs at Neighbourhood and Community Centres
- council and/or key Council departments continue work with the Library Corporation in developing processes for increased collaboration in arts and cultural planning and programming
- continue opportunities for improved access to diverse music options within the City of Whitehorse

11.1.3 Box Hill Community Arts Centre and its programs

Box Hill Community Arts Centre is a thriving, highly valued, extensively programmed and award winning architecturally designed facility. Over 55 groups use the centre on a regular basis alongside arts based school holiday and term programs for adult, youth and children facilitated by centre staff. The gallery area is centrally located in the building and houses exhibitions by professional and community artists. The gallery is also used to celebrate and educate issues of community importance through art. Spaces at BHCAC are leased to the Alcove Art Shop - selling handmade art products to the public and to Ceramics Victoria as an office area. There is a dedicated Artist in Residence space. The research and review process identified that the people using the facility are highly satisfied with the facility with just over 98% rating both the facilities and the programs offered as good or excellent. 13% of residents reported having attended or participated in programs at the Centre. The management team identify that the user profile of the Centre is increasingly multicultural.

The research undertaken found a number of issues that related to the Box Hill Community Arts Centre and its programs.

11.1.3.1 Review and assess Box Hill Community Arts Centre facility needs and gaps

The Centre is operating at close to capacity. The centre staff and centre users identified that the increasing demand for space/time and programs in the facility are not always able to be accommodated. The need for increased studio space for the municipality was identified by the broader community consultation supporting a review for the Box Hill Community Arts Centre.

It is recommended that a detailed market analysis and business case of the Box Hill Community Arts Centre be conducted examining the potential growth and demand to expand the available program space. This assessment would determine how to cater to the unmet program needs for existing and future users of the facility. Any review of the facility should :

- maintain and complement the integrity of the architecture. The iconic nature of the facility and its architecture was cited as an important feature
- ensure maintenance of the friendly "not too big" vibe of the centre, which is considered to be an important aspect of the facility
- community Arts Projects beyond the regular program would require extra financial resources for administration and delivery

A review is required of the programming gaps of the Centre to determine if it fully caters to the diverse community of Whitehorse. Art projects that respond to social issues within the community or marginalised groups that promote connectedness are highly valued. A review will examine how community art can play a broader role with exploring social issues and assist community development in Whitehorse.

11.1.3.2 Relationships and collaboration with the Education Sector and Partners

One of the key opportunities for future development of the facility is to build on links with educational institutions and form external partners. The Centre already has relationships with a number of local schools and there is enthusiasm to build programs that enhance and/or complement those offered through these institutions and organisations.

Art Class 2012,
Box Hill Community Arts Centre

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the following be addressed as priorities in relation to Box Hill Community Art Centre and its programs:

- a review be undertaken to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Box Hill Community Art Centre and its programs with particular reference to
- current service levels and unmet demand for further services
- further community engagement possibilities of the centre through its art programs and potential for greater Outreach initiatives
- continue to form stronger collaborative relationships with local educational institutions and collaborations with external partners

11.1.4 Box Hill Town Hall and Minor Halls

The Box Hill Town Hall provides an important traditional 'town hall function', a place of scale that can house public gathering/activities. It is a highly visible, iconic public building and people report enjoying the 'cultural melting pot' and cultural interaction opportunities that it provides. Both the Box Hill Town Hall and Minor Halls provide both permanent meeting spaces for community groups/organisations and provides a variety of spaces for hire for private, community and cultural activities. Although the facility enjoys strong occupancy there remains growth opportunities to promote all facilities managed by the Box Hill Town Hall more widely in the eastern region.

The Community Hub located at the Box Hill Town Hall also provides an important service for local community organisations and allows access to the services provided by these organisations to the community. Almost a third of residents reported that they had attended or participated in activity in the facility.

The Minor Halls provide an important community resource for groups that meet on a regular or semi-regular basis and engage with others in their local community.

The research undertaken found the following in relation to the Box Hill Town Hall.

11.1.4.1 Parking

Car parking is the biggest challenge that users experience in accessing and using the facility. Although it is important to note it is estimated that up to 25% of people choose to use the facility because of its easy access to public transport. As part of this work a review of way finding signage, vehicle and pedestrian movement will be completed.

11.1.4.2 Marketing opportunities

The Box Hill Town provides a great service for the community for meetings and cultural events. The venue is currently not at capacity and there exists an opportunity to further market the services of this facility to the wider community.

11.1.4.3 Programming Opportunities

There is a potential to increase arts programming opportunities at the Box Hill Town Hall. Victoria hosts many festivals in a calendar year across the state and this facility is a possible location to bring new events to Whitehorse.

Recommendation

It is recommended the following be addressed as priorities in relation to the Box Hill Town Hall and Minor Halls.

- in line with the Box Hill Central Activities Area Car Parking Strategy review methods of communication of car parking alternatives for those driving as well as sustainable choices for those attending the town hall by other means
- further marketing initiatives for the Box Hill Town Hall and Minor Halls that promotes the full range of facility hire and service options available
- Box Hill is a hub of cultural diversity and this facility presents a prime hosting venue for culturally diverse programming activities. A review of the potential for engaging community groups from the Hub as well as external organisations providing arts and cultural activities for the community

PILLAR 1
ARTS & CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

11.1.5 Festivals and Events

Festivals and events deliver community cultural development outcomes that are consistent with priorities in a number of Council's core strategies. Festivals and events offer the opportunity for residents to connect and celebrate their community and place. These are important 'bang for buck' cross generational community cultural development opportunities and are important services for Council to continue to resource.

Council's support of festivals is well founded as local festivals and events are among the most popular arts and cultural events provided by Council. Whitehorse residents place a high value on festivals and outdoor events. 38% of people within the municipality reported that they had attended festivals and events in the 12 months preceding the household survey. Many of these festivals are Council managed events.

11.1.5.1 Review event programming, infrastructure and identify any gaps with events

Festivals provide a great source of engagement with the community and the high attendance indicates their success and demand for further events in Whitehorse. A review of the event season is required to identify the demand and need for additional events for the community and to identify gaps currently in the festival program.

In addition, there is a need to review the costs and resourcing for festivals to ensure that Council's festival and events program is able to meet community needs and best practice expectations.

The standard industry cost of providing festivals and outdoor events has increased by approximately 50% over the last 5 years due to the rising costs associated with security, traffic management and risk management. Consideration is required to ensure appropriate resources are in place to safely and effectively manage events for the community.

11.1.5.2 Review how to best support popular, growing community driven festivals

15% of residents indicated that they had attended the Chinese New Year Festival. The Chinese New Year Festival is a community managed event however, Council plays a key role in supporting the Asian Business Association of Whitehorse in the running of this event due to its size and complexity. As events like this grow, Council needs to ensure that these support services are adequately resourced so community groups are aware and carefully handle the complexity, costs and risks associated with managing events.

11.1.5.3 Review festival locations and their continued capacity to meet requirements

The location of Council's major festivals and events has been raised as an issue. The site around the Whitehorse Centre is considered an excellent location but it was also acknowledged that for major events it is at capacity and overcrowding could be an issue. In conjunction with the Whitehorse Centre redevelopment project, consideration is required for the use of open space so that as the municipal precinct develops, it provides capacity, accessibility, services and safety for all users.

11.1.5.4 Community Festivals and Events should be programmed to be accessible for all

For people with mobility issues, the primary festival site surrounding the Whitehorse Centre is identified as challenging in relation to parking proximity and traversing pathways in safety. Finding/accessing amenities are difficult. Council could consider siting its events where pathways, parking and access to toilet facilities are accessible for people to attend and participate, to ensure accessibility measures are in place as much as possible.

Whitehorse Australia Day 2012

Recommendation

It is recommended that the following be addressed as priorities in relation to Festivals and Events

- a review of Council's Festivals Program to determine if the current offering of events meet community need and identify gaps in service
- a review of Council's involvement in community driven festivals recognising the increasing pressures on community organisations to meet the site and safety requirements with producing an event. A review will also include the implications to Council's festivals unit
- the operation of an event permit application process to assist both Council and the community event organisers manage staging events
- a review of Council's community festivals and events infrastructure be undertaken with particular reference to:
  - assessment of costs and resourcing to meet site and safety event requirements that ensures best practice is adopted and to act as a leader and advocate for appropriate event management in the municipality
  - assessment of current festival and event sites and potential future options to meet festival needs
  - improved physical access to all festivals

11.1.6 Heritage Services

In Whitehorse, formal heritage services supported by Council include monuments, Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex, indigenous festivals, cultural heritage programs, provision of heritage trails and interpretation, recognition of the Australian Impressionist artist camp and the celebration of multicultural heritage.

The research undertaken found the following in relation to Heritage Services:

11.1.6.1 Encouraging greater community access and use of Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex

Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex is an important heritage feature of Whitehorse. An estimated 18% of the Whitehorse residents have attended or participated in activity at the Complex. 94% of the Schwerkolt Cottage & Museum Complex users surveyed rated the facilities as good or excellent. 36% of users attended the museum and 16% visited for research/education purposes. 73.7% of users indicated that they would like to make greater use of the Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum in the future. Features such as provision of social and food areas, improved outdoor grassed/ shaded area, greater variety of programs and improved access were all suggested as features that would encourage greater use.

11.1.6.2 Foster community appreciation, expression and celebration of Whitehorse's cultural diversity

Work with all stakeholders including the municipalities local historical societies to achieve best outcomes in cultural heritage programing and the preservation of the local and natural built heritage. Both the Box Hill & Whitehorse Historical societies provide valuable community resources with their archival and collection capabilities.

11.1.6.3 Relationships and collaboration with the education sector

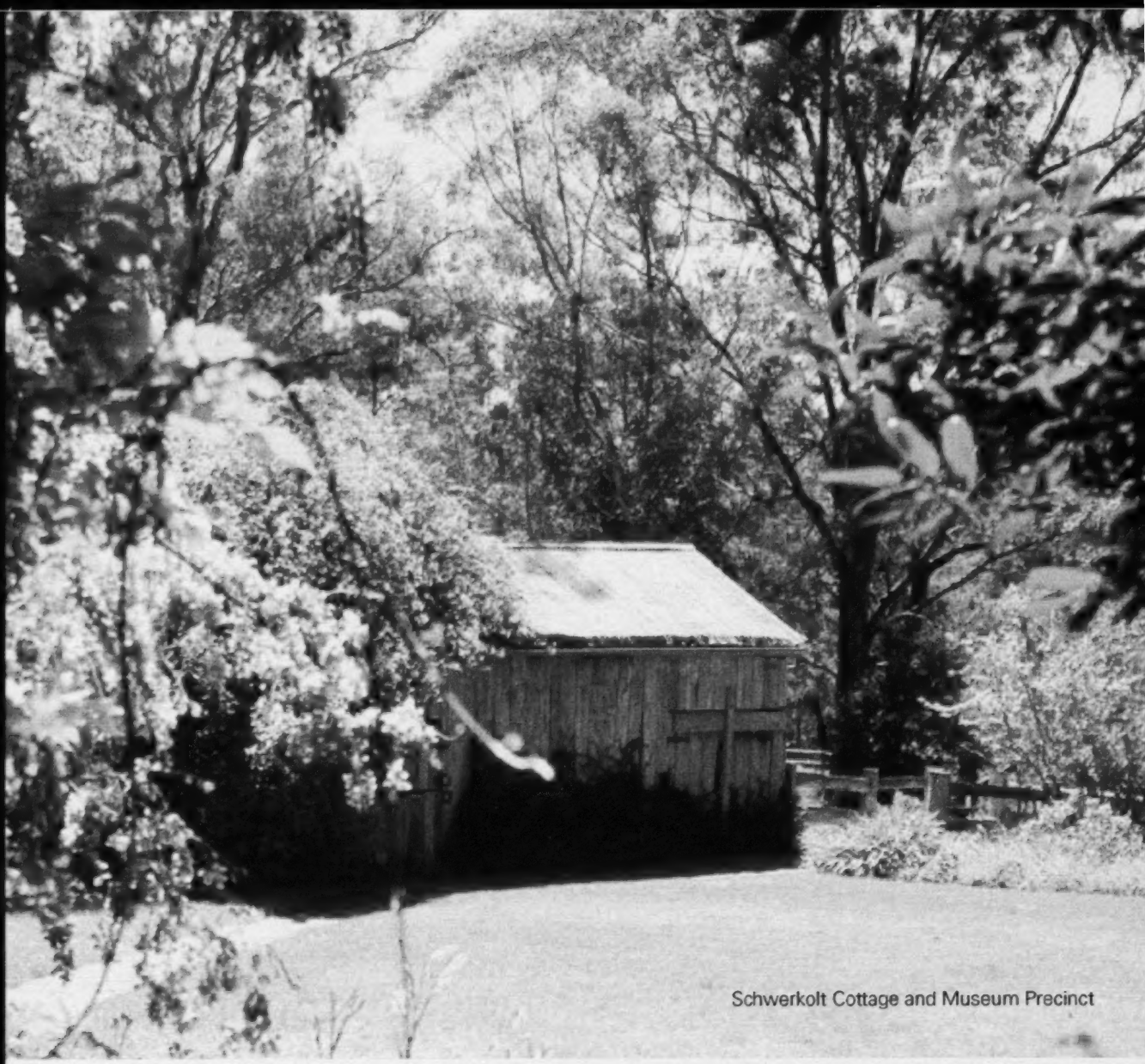
One of the key opportunities for future development of the facility is to build on links with educational institutions. There is enthusiasm to build programs that enhance and/or complement those offered through these institutions.

11.1.6.4 Indigenous and multicultural heritage

Arts and culture was identified as an important means of building community connections and cultural understanding. Programming and services in these areas allow people greater access and exposure to indigenous and other cultures through programs and services..

11.1.6.5 Strathdon House

Council acquired Strathdon House and Orchard and has been restricted with its future development due to a Vic Roads overlay of the precinct. Once an outcome is determined for this precinct by Vic Roads, Council will continue community consultation and planning to ensure the development of Strathdon House relates to its surroundings and the new, larger number of users in its proximity.



Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Precinct

Recommendation

It is recommended that the following be undertaken as priorities in relation to Whitehorse Heritage services:

- further marketing initiatives implemented to increase the awareness of the heritage programs and services to encourage greater community engagement
- in partnership with key stakeholders respond and develop stimulating cultural heritage programs
- work further with local educational institutions to collaborate on cultural heritage programs
- continue to build links and provide and/or support programming that celebrates the indigenous and multicultural heritage and diversity of the municipality
- continue the further development and implementation of heritage interpretation and signage around the municipality
- once the Vic Roads structure plan is confirmed a vision and business case for Strathdon House is to be developed to identify its future use

PILLAR 1
ARTS & CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

11.1.7 Whitehorse Artspace and its programs

The Whitehorse Artspace is located at the iconic Box Hill Town Hall and is a professional gallery space that houses the Whitehorse Art Collection and travelling exhibitions. The community satisfaction rating for this service remains consistently high and valued by the community.

The research undertaken found a number of issues that related to art exhibitions and the Whitehorse Artspace.

11.1.7.1 The Artspace has no 'street presence' and so opportunities for passing traffic are limited

The overall feedback about the Artspace was extremely positive, however many people felt that the visibility of the Artspace was a major impediment to increased community recognition and attendance. Improvement to the entrance of the Artspace and creating a greater 'street presence' to capture the passing traffic should be a priority improvement to the facility.

11.1.7.2 Increased profile for the Whitehorse Artspace

The research and consultation undertaken found that 29% of Whitehorse people had attended or participated in visual arts/art exhibitions in the 12 months prior to the household survey being conducted. Of all the arts and cultural activities identified by residents, this form of activity had the highest level of participation across the age groups. Only 4% of residents reported having participated in or attended a program at the Whitehorse Artspace thereby concluding the majority of people are not taking advantage of the Artspace.

11.1.7.3 Undertake a review of the Artist in Schools program

The Artist in Schools program has delivered many outstanding project outcomes.

A number of professional artists raised specific issues associated with the Artists in Schools grant program that Council provides. In particular, artists reported that while the program is highly valued, schools lack the experience in working with artists to understand how to manage arts projects.

11.1.7.4 Continued growth of and increased access to the Art and Memorabilia collections

There is strong support for the importance and the continued development of the Whitehorse Collections. These are considered to be culturally significant and part of Whitehorses sense of place and identity. Both the need to continue to build the collection and the need to have greater access to view it was identified as important.

There exists a powerful opportunity to commission public art throughout the municipality to provide gateways into the city and also at key sites within the city to increase people's daily interaction with art. A recent example is the glass artwork at the entrance to the redeveloped Aqualink Box Hill that successfully acknowledges the history of Surrey Dive through public art for the appreciation of all visitors to the facility.

Whitehorse Art Collection, Whitehorse Art Space

Recommendation

It is recommended that the following be addressed as priorities in relation to the Whitehorse Artspace:

- improving the Artspace 'street presence' so the Artspace has better community access and improved opportunities to attract passing traffic
- need to build local awareness of and increase access to art exhibitions and the Whitehorse Artspace. Further marketing initiatives implemented to increase the presence and exposure of the Artspace
- review the Artist in Schools program with a particular focus on Council's role in facilitating and promoting the program to ensure this experience is maximised for the younger generation
- council continue to actively develop the Art and Memorabilia collections and explore ways of improving access to and interpretation of the collection
- investigate community art projects in both open space and with new/redeveloped facilities to build community connectivity within the City of Whitehorse

11.1.8 Whitehorse Centre and its programs

The Whitehorse Centre is the City of Whitehorse's premium performing arts and functions venue. It fulfills an important civic, community and commercial function for the city. The research and consultation confirmed that it is a highly valued and utilised facility with over 25% of residents having attended or participated in an activity at the centre and 84.2% of its regular users rating the facilities as good or excellent.

The research undertaken found a number of issues that related to the Whitehorse Centre and more broadly, local performing arts gaps, needs and/or opportunities.

11.1.8.1 Regular User Concerns

- car parking
- food and beverage facilities
- the facility being overcrowded
- the level of fees and charges
- available studio/workshop space

11.1.8.2 Adequacy of current facilities

Consultation revealed that although the Whitehorse Centre was constructed to Australian Standards when built it no longer meets the current level of today's performing art and function facilities. The venue is tired looking, it is often at capacity and it is in need of substantial works to improve its operations and appearance. The results from the Whitehorse Centre Feasibility Study recommended that:

- the current theatre is too small. It should be increased by approximately 180 - 200 seats. The Centre Management reports that professional shows regularly sell out and many patrons miss out on shows.
- function facilities need to be upgraded and increased in size to meet demand. Function facility users identified that the facilities are tired, outdated and of insufficient size and flexibility to meet current and future needs

11.1.8.3 The Future Plan

The research and consultation findings support the need for more detailed feasibility work to be undertaken. The Whitehorse Centre Feasibility Study Report had been completed at the time of compilation of this report.

A market analysis and business case is being conducted and concepts plans developed to continue the future plan for the Whitehorse Centre in meeting community need.

11.1.8.4 Programming gaps at the Centre

Currently the Whitehorse Centre programs and successfully delivers a professional theatre season and midweek matinee season. The steady growth of these programs support their popularity and resonance in the community. The current programs attract an older audience to the centre. With an ageing population this signals an increasing demand for these performing arts activities in the municipality. With this demographic staying longer in their homes, it is likely they will look for a connectedness through these performing arts activities thereby enabling a greater sense of wellbeing in the community.

Many of the programs at the Centre are in house and require people to attend the venue as an active or passive participant. An identified gap is a new program that operates remotely or as an outreach program and brings arts outside the centre to those who could not otherwise access

the arts. The role of arts and culture through live performance is an excellent mechanism to enable positive health and well being outcomes for Whitehorse residents.

The youth market is rarely attending live performance at the Whitehorse Centre. It is important to engage with a younger audience through theatre for their socialization and its capacity to explore issues affecting youth.

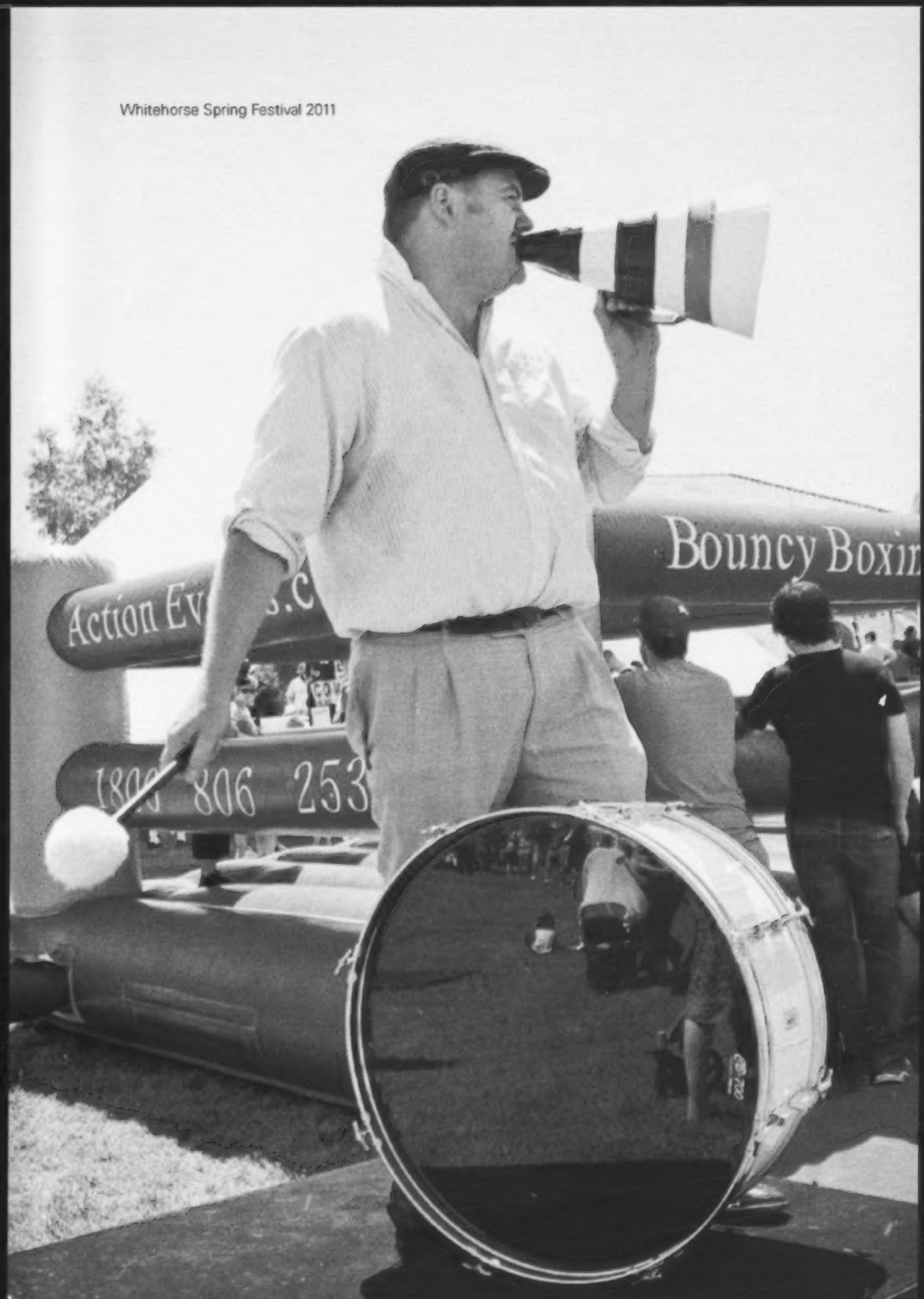
Explore an artist or company in residence using studio space at the Centre with the intent of developing works that reflect the lives of those in the community. This program can also allow an artist to work with local schools and residents of Whitehorse in a performing arts capacity.

Recommendation

- to implement the Council endorsed findings and actions from the 2013/2014 Whitehorse Centre Redevelopment Project
- devise a performing arts curatorial plan that reflects the diverse programming needs and aspirations for the community
- investigate the programming and residency opportunities of the Centre to encourage community engagement and well being for current and future audiences both within the centre and through outreach programs

Bubblewrap and Boxes
Professional Theatre Program
2011, Whitehorse Centre

Whitehorse Spring Festival 2011



PILLAR 2

COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PILLAR 2
COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

11.2.1 Community Cultural Development (CCD) in Whitehorse

The term Community Cultural Development is used to describe a process whereby community-based cultural and artistic practices are used (by a community) to express its identity, celebrate commonalities and differences, and address and resolve important issues. At its core, CCD is about communities working creatively together and gaining a sense of collective identity, a sense of place and a sense of belonging.

Research identified that Council's major focus in the provision for arts and culture were the areas of festivals and events, facilities (and their associated programs/services), art collection, heritage services and grants/funding. This service delivery is highly valued and considered significant in facilitating and supporting CCD outcomes. A consolidation of this output to ensure it continues to accurately meet these needs whilst examining gaps in CCD delivery is recommended.

Overwhelmingly, residents responded that having arts and culture as part of their life and environment helps to create and confirm a sense of uniqueness about Whitehorse. The majority of people think arts and culture are an important part of a rounded full life.

When asked to respond to a series of value statements about arts and culture as part of the household survey, people agreed or strongly agreed with the following:

- that people can enjoy sport as well as Arts, Culture and Heritage **99%**
- that Arts, Culture and Heritage places, events and activities help us understand others whose lives are different from our own **92%**
- that Arts, Culture and Heritage are an important ingredient in making Whitehorse a unique and interesting place **90%**
- that going to Arts, Cultural and Heritage facilities, programs and activities is a great way of spending time with friends and family **88%**
- that having Arts, Cultural and Heritage facilities, program and activities in the local area is important to them **79%**
- arts, Cultural and Heritage places, objects, events and activities help them feel part of their local community **75%**
- the Arts, Culture and Heritage are an important part of their lifestyle **66%**

57% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement "the Arts, Culture and Heritage are okay, they are just not relevant to me". It is clear that the over-riding 'umbrella theme' is that all arts and culture activities are ways of building and contributing to a strong sense of community and pride of place. Whitehorse residents clearly feel that having access to and participation in arts and cultural activities is an important contributor to building cultural understanding, making Whitehorse interesting and unique and helping them feel part of their community.

11.2.2 Community Spirit and Pride of Place

The research undertaken found the following in relation to Whitehorse community spirit and pride of place:

11.2.2.1 Celebrating diverse culture

There is a great deal of arts and cultural activity/ programming occurring within the various cultural groups of Whitehorse. Most cultural groups identify that the arts are an important way of bridging cultural issues and uncertainties – that they are a good way of understanding differences, but also similarities between cultures. Participation and attendance at Global Fiesta, the Box Hill Community Arts Centre and the Box Hill Town Hall identified steadily increasing demand from different cultural groups for access to space and programs

The local indigenous community (through Council's Indigenous Advisory Committee) talked about the importance of arts and culture as a way to generate/foster community connectedness. They identified the importance of arts and cultural activities as a means of bridging cultural differences and understanding and enabling non-indigenous people to have access and exposure to indigenous culture.

11.2.2.2 Urban design, heritage and city development

Beyond a focus on programs and facilities, Whitehorse resident feedback highlighted the role that arts and culture should play in urban environment. Things such as continuing to commission and install public and community artworks, provision of 'heritage interpretation' around the city, protection of heritage overlay, improved signage and creation/retention/ improvement of interesting public spaces and open spaces were all suggested as important.

The creation of a 'beautiful place' should be extended to include investment in buildings of architectural significance and integrity. The notion of having a strong vision for the future and investing in future cultural heritage was a strong undertone.

Retaining and celebrating the municipality's history and culture have been identified as an important component to cultural programming.

Council's urban design and town planning strategies should incorporate actions that will achieve outcomes for these community priorities.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council:

- continue to work with indigenous and other cultural groups to develop arts and cultural programs that celebrate heritage and diversity, tolerance and understanding
- support cultural heritage programs that celebrate educate and retain the memory and life of the municipalities history and culture
- incorporate actions into town planning and urban design strategies that encourage and enable ongoing and active inclusion of artworks and fine architecture into the local built and natural environment
- ensure public programs are considered with redevelopments to civic buildings and that public art installations exist at key points to provide a sense of place and destination within Whitehorse

11.2.3 Arts Industry Support

The research undertaken found a number of issues that related to Arts Industry support as follows:

11.2.3.1 Need to assist and promote professional arts practice as legitimate contributors in the local community

In terms of the predominant employment and industries of Whitehorse people, professional artists/arts practice represents a small group. 3% of people who identified that they had attended or participated in arts and cultural activities in the last 12 months did so as professional practitioners. 2% of people who participated in arts and cultural activities did so because it was their job or career.

Artists and others involved in the consultation sessions spoke about the gap in appreciation and understanding of the arts as a professional industry. For artists the lack of appreciation that they should receive a 'fair wage' for their work was a key theme. This issue extends to both gender and racial equality to ensure artists are remunerated irrespective of gender or race. For non-artists, the confusion around how to work with artists, commission them and pay them was of concern. It is also apparent that the connection between practicing professional artists and the role they play within the local economy both as an industry and in terms of tourism is not well understood. This is currently a gap in service and understanding.

Many talented artists and arts organisations exist in Whitehorse and provide valuable services to the local community. Many of these organisations have existed for many years, namely the Whitehorse Arts Association, U3A, Whitehorse Orchestra and the Box Hill Art Group among many others whose artistry and contribution is important to the arts and cultural landscape of Whitehorse.

11.2.3.2 Economic and Tourism Opportunities

The role that the arts and artists can play in attracting people to a city and/or building tourism benefits is well documented. Arts and culture is identified as a key attractor to Melbourne's east. Council could further explore the economic and tourism benefits of growing and supporting its local arts industry. Council's economic development and tourism strategies could incorporate actions that will achieve outcomes for arts and culture as an industry delivering tourism and local economic benefits.

11.2.3.3 Arts Education

There is concern that the opportunity to access education based arts experience was in decline with less emphasis in school curriculums and, in particular, the cessation of a number of major arts courses in local institutions.

There could be further connection between Council's arts and cultural services/facilities and the educational institutions. Working more collaboratively was identified as an opportunity to build opportunities for the community. Council will continue to look for opportunities to work with educational institutions within Whitehorse but will not undertake work of another level of government.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the following be addressed as priorities in relation to arts industry support:

- develop an artist register to enhance connection of artists within the community
- explore cultural tourism opportunities
- encourage arts practice within the local economy and a fair wage for services
- further develop a collaborative relationship with local education institutions for the continuing evolution of Whitehorse's strong arts and cultural heritage

Art Class,
Box Hill Community Arts Centre

11.2.4 Cultural Development Support Services

The research undertaken found a number of issues that related to Cultural Development Support Services as follows:

11.2.4.1 Need for an arts and cultural marketing and communications plan

Of the 67% of people who indicated in the household survey that they would like to take part in arts and cultural activities, 28% indicated that additional information would encourage them to make greater use of or participate in arts and cultural activities and services in the future. A further 12% made specific suggestions that related to better promotion and marketing:

- a significant number of people suggested use of email and internet for notifying of events and activities
- getting information from the library, and the library notice board in particular, was often cited as a source of information
- notice boards in general were cited as sources of information
- the use of social media to communicate with a broad demographic

Of the people who had not participated in arts, cultural or heritage activities in the last 12 months, 15% identified that lack of knowledge/information was a main reason for not participating. Lack of and/or need for provision of better promotion and communication is a major theme. Almost universally, people identified that improvement to marketing of Council's assets, programs and services was needed and would assist in building cultural participation/engagement.

Groups and individuals alike involved in arts and cultural pursuits identified that effective marketing and connection with the community regarding 'who they are and what they do' was a constant challenge and one that they would like Council to assist with. The idea that Council might be able to facilitate an overall action plan to assist promotion/connection between groups and their activities was frequently suggested.

11.2.4.2 Group Development & Support Services

Arts and cultural groups identified that the top three challenges facing them were:

- fluctuating membership
- lack of volunteers
- need to attract 'younger members'

As part of its development role, Council could work with organisations to develop strategies to assist in meeting these challenges.

11.2.4.3 Clarifying everyone's roles and responsibility in Arts & Cultural Service Provision

There are many people and organisations across the municipality involved in the provision and production of local arts and culture. Feedback through the consultation process identified that having a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all arts and cultural services providers would enable better use of resources across groups. Groups felt that understanding what Council's role and services extend to would assist them in dealing more effectively with Council.

Whitehorse Seniors Festival 2010
Box Hill Town Hall

11.2.4.4 Support for less traditional art forms

It was generally felt that Whitehorse's provision for arts and cultural programs and services had a very 'traditional arts' focus. Not that this was seen as a negative thing, rather it was identified that there are some newer art forms (eg. new media) that should be given support and focus through provision of facilities and services. In particular, it was identified that the use of technology for arts was predominately (though not exclusively) preferred by the younger demographic. In order to engage younger people the need to embrace some of the more progressive art forms should possibly be considered. Council should develop programs and services that support and/or promote emerging and/or less traditional art forms.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the following be addressed as priorities in relation to Cultural Development Support Services:

- further activation of the Whitehorse Arts and Culture communications plan
- an outline of the services and activities provided by Council
- how to effectively promote the diversity of arts, cultural and heritage groups operating within the community
- opportunities to use new and/or innovative media forms and explore how social media is resourced across the organisation
- review and define Council's role in provision of support and development services for local arts and cultural groups and foster opportunities for groups to make their own connections
- program and support less traditional artforms to engage new audiences for Whitehorse

11.2.5 Grant Programs

The research undertaken found a number of issues that related to Grant Programs as follows:

11.2.5.1 Need for support of arts and cultural groups and programs through Council grants

Arts, cultural and community groups ranked provision of grants as the number one service that Council could/should provide to support arts activity in Whitehorse. Similarly, artists identified grant/funding for arts and cultural programs as being a high priority Council service. This supports the important function that Council's grants programs play in facilitating arts and cultural activity.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council undertake a review of its Arts and Cultural grant programs including:

- the level of community engagement in arts and cultural grant allocation
- how to minimise administrative processes and maximize support for grant applicants, thus improving outcomes

Whitehorse Spring Festival 2011

Jade McRae,
Whitehorse Australia Day 2012

ACTION PLAN

	Focus Area	Action	RU	TF	Council Plan
PILLAR 1: Arts & Cultural Facilities and Programs	**Facility and Program Provision Gaps** 1. Need for increased facility provision 2. Diverse music program 3. Gaps in Service Delivery 4. Community Facility Management Services 5. Better integration and collaboration with the Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Service as one the major local providers of arts and cultural programming	It is recommended that Council, as part of its future service planning give priority to:			
		1. facility provision gaps at the Whitehorse Centre in the areas of performance space, rehearsal space, studio and workshop space, exhibition space, music performance opportunities and venues, access for all abilities to facilities	CFP CAP	Dec 2021	1.1.5 2.1.3 2.1.5
		2. consider opportunities for improved access to diverse music options within the City of Whitehorse	CFP CD YS	Dec 2014	1.1.3 4.1.10
		3. program provision for people with children, people with disabilities, young people and older people	CFP CD	Dec 2016	1.1.3 4.1.10
		4. undertaking a service driven asset management review of Council's community halls and other facilities to ensure that over time, facilities are improved to meet the service needs of community and capacity of facilities for arts and cultural activities	CFP CAP	Dec 2019	1.1.1 2.1.3 2.1.5
		5. working with the Library Corporation and Neighbourhood Houses to develop a process for increased collaboration in arts and cultural planning and programming	CFP Libraries CD	Dec 2018	1.1.5 1.1.9 1.1.10 4.1.9
	Box Hill Community Arts Centre and its programs 1. Review and assess future Box Hill Community Arts Centre facility needs and gaps 2. Relationships and collaboration with the Education Sector	It is recommended that Council: 1. undertake a business case review for Box Hill Community Arts Centre to provide a comprehensive plan for the Centre and its programs with particular reference to analysis of: - further community engagement opportunities at the Centre and through outreach programs - current service levels and unmet demand for further services - current operation resources and those required for future services - the art centre's future facility needs and gaps	CFP CD YS	Dec 2017	1.1.1 1.1.5 1.1.9 1.1.10 2.1.5 4.1.10
		2. identify and pursue opportunities to form further collaborative relationships with local educational institutions.	CFP	Dec 2018	1.1.3 1.1.10 5.1.3

Focus Area	Action	RU	TF	Council Plan
Box Hill Town Hall 1. Parking conditions 2. Attract more people to the facility 3. Encourage greater cultural access and use	1. in line with the Box Hill Central Activities Area Car Parking Strategy review options and communication methods to inform users of the facility of car parking options in the local area. As part of this work a review of way finding signage, vehicle and pedestrian movement will be completed	CFP	Dec 2014	1.1.11
	2. expansion of the marketing plan to promote the Box Hill Town Hall and minor halls for increased utilization	CFP ARDM	Dec 2014	1.1.3
	3. a review for further engaging community groups from the Hub as well as external organisations to use the Box Hill Town Hall for arts and cultural programming opportunities	CFP	Dec 2017	1.1.3 1.1.10
Festivals and Events 1. A review of Council's festivals program to assess the current offering and how well it meets the community cultural needs of Whitehorse 2. Review how to best support popular, growing community driven festivals 3. Review festival locations and their continued capacity to meet requirements 4. Community Festivals and Events should be designed to be accessible for all	It is recommended that Council:			
	1. undertake a review of Council's festivals and events program to determine if the current offering of events meet community need and identify gaps in service	CFP CD YS	Dec 2015	1.1.3 1.1.4 1.1.5
	- review marketing strategies associated with Council run events	CFP ARDM	Dec 2014	1.1.3 1.1.6
	- review the costs and resources required to deliver Council's Festival Season	CFP	Dec 2015	4.1.4
	2. undertake a review of community run events program with particular reference to: - assessment of costs and resourcing needs of Council to support community managed events and the ability of community organisations to manage the safety and risks issues accompanying these events	CFP RISK	Dec 2015	1.1.5
	- how to best support local community driven festivals and events	CFP CD	Dec 2016	1.1.5
	3. assess the current festival and event sites and potential future site options to meet the needs of the festival and events in Whitehorse	CFP PP&R PARKS RISK	Dec 2015	2.1.3 2.1.5 3.1.1 3.3.7
	4. continue to improve access to all festivals, and work with other Council departments to ensure access opportunities are understood and maximised	CFP CITY CD RISK	Dec 2014	1.1.2 1.1.4 1.1.6 1.1.11

RU - Responsible Unit
TF - Time Frame
CFP - Cultural Facilities & Programs
CFP is the lead unit for this action plan engaging the support/advice/services of other departments

ARDM - Arts & Recreation Marketing
CAP - Capital Works
CD - Community Development
BUS - Business & Economic Development

RISK - Risk Management
PARKS - Parkswide
CITY - City Works
COM - Communications

PP&R - Parks, Planning & Recreation
P&BD - Planning & Building
ENG - Engineering
YS - Youth Services

	Focus Area	Action	RU	TF	Council Plan
PILLAR 1: Arts & Cultural Facilities and Programs	**Heritage Services** 1. Encouraging greater community access and use of Schwerkolt Cottage and Museum Complex 2. Foster community appreciation, expression and celebration of Whitehorse's cultural history 3. Relationships and collaboration with the education sector 4. Indigenous and multicultural heritage 5. Provision of 'heritage interpretation' around the city 6. Strathdon House – Next Stage	It is recommended that Council: 1. further marketing initiatives implemented to increase the awareness of the heritage programs and services to encourage greater community engagement. The Marketing Strategy should give particular focus to what is needed to further build community engagement with programs that celebrate and educate the history and culture of the municipality	CFP ARDM	Dec 2015	1.1.3 1.1.6
		2. in partnership with key stakeholders further develop and implement cultural heritage programs. Both the Box Hill and Whitehorse Historical Societies provide valuable archival and collection services for the community	CFP CD	Dec 2018	1.1.8 1.1.9 4.1.10
		3. work further with local educational institutions in collaborative relationships for cultural heritage program development	CFP YS	Dec 2018	5.1.3
		4. continue to build links and provide and/or support programming that celebrates the indigenous and multicultural heritage of the municipality	CFP CD	Dec 2018	1.1.1 1.1.3 4.1.10
		5. develop a plan for further development and implementation of heritage interpretation and signage around the municipality	CFP CITY ENG	Dec 2017	1.1.6 2.1.3 4.1.10
		6. once the Vic Roads structure plan is confirmed a vision and business case for Strathdon House is to be developed to identify its future use	CFP PARKS CITY PP&R P&BD	Dec 2018	1.1.1 1.1.3 2.1.6

	Focus Area	Action	RU *	TF	Council Plan
	Whitehorse Artspace and its programs 1. The Artspace has no 'street presence' and so opportunities for passing traffic are limited 2. Need to increase local awareness and access to art exhibitions and the Whitehorse Artspace. 3. Review of the Artist in School program. 4. Continued growth of and increased access to the municipal art collections. 5. Continued growth of the public art in the City of Whitehorse	It is recommended that Council: 1. undertake planning to improve the Artspace 'street presence' so the Artspace has better community access and improved opportunities to attract passing traffic	CFP CAP	Dec 2018	1.1.1 2.1.1 2.1.6
		2. further marketing initiatives implemented to build local awareness of and increase access to art exhibitions and the Whitehorse Artspace	CFP ARDM	Dec 2014	1.1.3 1.1.6
		3. review the Artist in School Program with a particular focus on Council's role in facilitating the program to ensure this experience is maximised for the younger generation	CFP	Dec 2015	1.1.3 1.1.10
		4. continue to actively develop the municipal art collection and explore ways of improving access to and interpretation of the collection	CFP ARDM	Dec 2022	1.1.6
		5. develop public art collections at key points in the City	CFP CITY P&BD ENG	Dec 2022	1.1.6 3.1.1
	Whitehorse Centre and its programs 1. There is a need to develop a 'future plan' for the Whitehorse Centre. 2. Program gaps	1. to implement the findings and actions from the 2013/2014 Whitehorse Centre Redevelopment Project	CFP	Dec 2015	1.1.1 2.1.3 2.1.5
		2. investigate program gaps and opportunities to broaden the access for the community to experience performing arts. Develop the program into new markets, artists in residence and outreach programs to engage in different ways with the community	CFP ARDM	Dec 2022	1.1.2 1.1.3 1.1.6

RU - Responsible Unit
TF - Time Frame
CFP - Cultural Facilities & Programs
BUS - Business & Economic Development
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	Focus Area	Action	RU	TF	Council Plan
PILLAR 2: Community Cultural Development	**Community Spirit and Pride of Place** 1. Celebrating diverse culture 2. Urban design and city development	It is recommended that Council: 1. continue to work with Indigenous and other cultural groups to develop arts & cultural programs that celebrate diversity, tolerance and understanding	CFP CD	Dec 2022	1.1.1
		2. incorporate actions into town planning and urban design strategies that encourage and enable ongoing and active inclusion of artworks and fine architecture into the local built and natural environment, ensuring heritage overlays are protected within the City of Whitehorse	CFP CITY PP&R ENG PARKS P&BD	Dec 2022	3.1.1
	Arts Industry Support 1. Promote professional arts practice as a legitimate and valuable contributor to the economic and tourism opportunities of the City. 3. Arts Education	It is recommended that Council: 1. encourage practice within the local economy - explore cultural tourism opportunities - encourage professional arts practice within the local economy - develop an artists register to enhance the connection of artists within the community	CFP BUS	Dec 2020	1.1.6 1.1.11 4.1.12 5.1.1
		2. further develop a collaborative relationship with local education institutions for the ongoing evolution of the strong arts and cultural heritage of Whitehorse	CFP	Dec 2019	1.1.9 1.1.11 5.1.3

	Focus Area	Action	RU	TF	Council Plan
	Cultural Development Support Services 1. Need for an arts and cultural marketing and communications plan 2. Group Development & Support Services 3. Support for less traditional art forms	It is recommended that the following be addressed as priorities in relation to Cultural Development Support Services: 1. further activation of the Whitehorse Arts and Culture communications plan. The plan should include consideration of how to effectively promote the diversity of arts, cultural and heritage groups operating within the community as well as defining the services and activities provided by council as well as opportunities to use new and/or innovative media forms and its resourcing across the Organisation	CFP COM ARDM BUS	Dec 2016	1.1.3
		2. review and define Council's role in provision of support and development services for local arts and cultural groups based on identified issues of fluctuating membership, lack of volunteers and few young members	CFP CD	Dec 2021	1.1.3 1.1.8
		3. identify approaches to support emerging artforms that increase participation with groups not yet engaged	CFP	Dec 2019	1.1.3 4.1.10
	Grant Programs 1. Need for support of arts and cultural groups and programs through Council grants	1. it is recommended that Council undertake a review of its Community Programs to include: - the level of community engagement in arts and cultural grant allocation - how to minimise administrative processes, maximizing support for grant applicants and improving outcomes	CFP CD	Dec 2020	1.1.10

RU - Responsible Unit
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